

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A friction stir welding method, comprising:  
butting two members together, a gap being formed therebetween;  
welding areas of the gap formed at the butted portion where the gap  
exceeds a first size; and  
performing friction stir welding along the joint line including the areas  
welded.
2. A friction stir welding method according to claim 1, wherein said  
welding is performed to all the joint lines to which said friction stir welding is to  
be performed.
3. A friction stir welding method according to claim 2, wherein:  
a rotary tool used for said friction stir welding comprises a smaller  
diameter portion to be inserted to the welding area, and a larger diameter portion,  
than the smaller diameter portion, to be positioned outside the welding area, a  
boundary being provided between the smaller and larger diameter portions; and

said friction stir welding is performed with the boundary between said smaller diameter portion and said larger diameter portion being positioned within a nugget protruding from surfaces of said members formed during said welding step.

4. A method for manufacturing a car body, comprising:

welding the areas of a gap exceeding a first value formed at a butted portion between an underframe and side structures or the butted portion between the side structures and a roof structure; and

performing friction stir welding along the joint line including the areas welded.